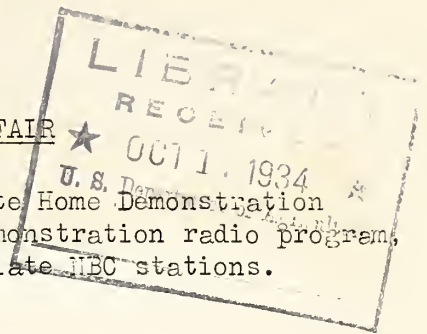


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
E892K

EXHIBITING HOME PRODUCTS AT THE FAIR



A radio talk by Miss Daisy Deane Williamson, State Home Demonstration Leader, Durham, New Hampshire, delivered in the home demonstration radio program, October 3, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations.

--ooOoo--

Back home in Indiana and in many other states as you know, State Fair is a magnificent climax to the fall season with its harvest and storage of fruits and vegetables for the winter.

In New Hampshire we have no state fair, but our two largest fairs at Rochester and Hopkinton are almost in the state-fair class in scope of exhibits and attendance.

You and I can remember when farm people, after spending months producing high quality marketable products, would come to town with monstrosities of field and garden when fair time arrived. Because of this contrast between what was raised and what was exhibited, the New Hampshire Extension Service started a fair improvement project about 10 years ago. We wanted to make fairs more educational, with less emphasis on the largest pumpkins and the biggest potatoes.

We set for ourselves four definite goals. One was to teach exhibitors how to select quality products. Another was to show them how to set up well-balanced and attractive exhibits, using agricultural products for decoration instead of yards of crepe paper. A third aim was to make exhibitors familiar with the score card by which their products are judged. And finally we wanted each community when it received its final score to have the opportunity to learn what was considered the good and the bad points of the exhibits.

We began the new work. We visited practically every group which planned to compete for the liberal prize money offered annually for Grange exhibits at the Rochester Fair. We gave detailed information on selection of all products involved. We exhibited canned goods at these meetings to show how these products should look. In some instances the women brought their own canned products for criticism. The groups were also instructed in how to set up the whole exhibit.

Keen rivalry exists among these Granges, but the crepe paper has disappeared and the biggest and queerest products have been left at home. The exhibits are built from a lovely center arrangement outward with the name of the group exhibiting high up in the center on the back wall. Spectators view these with the idea of seeing the quality of products the community has produced and the attractive set up used.

Another feature of this fair is the display of community extension activities along home demonstration lines. Each community participating portrays in a booth one feature of extension work which the women have learned and put into practice within the last two years.

(over)

This year these exhibits featured the roadside market, restoration of old furniture, treatment of the back yard, a canning budget for the family, a modern woman's wardrobe, and proper storage of garden products. These were set up attractively with necessary posters to tell their stories in a concise and simple way.

We wonder sometimes if exhibits are worth the time put into them. One year I kept a record of the people who stopped long enough to examine the display and read the posters in the canning-budget booth. In the course of two hours more than 400 did so. Fifty asked for canning bulletins and 25 asked for information on their own canning difficulties.

For years community exhibits have been featured at the Hopkinton Fair. Cooked and canned goods, vegetables, fruits, handicraft, fancy and plain sewing, quilts, rugs, dairy and poultry products are required. These communities have learned standards. They can pick their best quality products and they have learned how to set them up in the most attractive manner.

As I did my part in judging these community exhibits I have always explained to the women in charge all the things that were not up to standard and why they weren't. These women have become quite expert in judging. Now such good quality is shown in all their exhibits that sometimes the difference in their final scores is less than three-tenths of one percent.

In the last 10 years all the premium lists in the large fairs and in dozens of small fairs in our state have been revised and are being kept up to date. Fairs are a means of extending better agricultural and home practices, we believe. We shall work for further improvement in them.

If you are interested in receiving the free bulletin, "Improving Exhibits at Fair," write to the Extension Service, Durham, N.H. It's yours for the asking.

#